

THE HISTORY OF

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LETTER

TO

Mr. John Spranger, &c.

THE HISTORY OF

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LETTER

TO

Mr. John Spranger,

On his excellent

PROPOSAL

FOR

Paving, cleansing, and lighting

THE

Streets of WESTMINSTER,

AND THE

Parishes in Middlesex.

By Mr. J. HANWAY.

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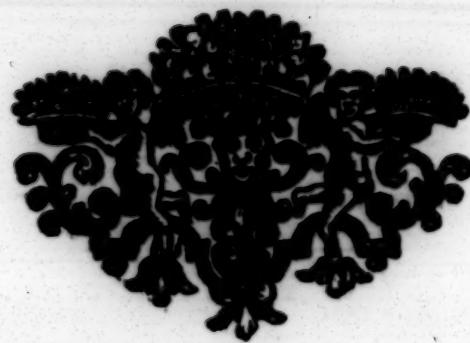


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T O

Mr. SPRANGER, Author of the Plan
for paving the Streets, &c.

S I R,

I T is now near twelve months since I first heard that a gentleman of Covent-Garden had formed a Plan for paving our Streets, and I waited with longing wishes for a communication of it to the public.

Whatever might be the ignorance or indolence of our fore-fathers, with respect to their roads, so much less traversed by them than ours are, surely the pavement of their Metropolis, the seat of empire, the residence of their great lords, and the assembly of the whole legislative body of the Realm, could never be reduced to so deplorable a state as ours is now in. How strange soever this

may seem, the present age is undoubtedly refined and enlightened: luxurious ease and delicate convenience were never greater objects of our attention: I will not say we prefer them to the reversion of Heaven, but I am sure the pleasures and amusements of life are become our chief study. Without being melancholy I am often led into reflections concerning the fate of nations, and am, upon this occasion, reminded of the observation which is frequently made in Holland. "Whilst the *States*" say they, "were in a flourishing condition, the Canals "of Amsterdam, the Hague, and other "places of the greatest note, were kept "perfectly clean; but *now* they are fre- "quently a nuisance to the inhabitants."

The relaxation of good order and discipline, is only another name for the disobe-
dience to laws. There is hardly a nation in the world which suffers half so much from the want of *good Laws*, as from the *disre-
gard* of them; and the *minutest* concerns of government, often serve as a clue to trace out the errors in points the most *essential*. If the magistrate is careless of *his* duty; or the subjects in general repugnant to *theirs*, in an article

article which intimately concerns their own health and convenience, it is a sure token that the splendor of a state is in a declining condition. Thank Heaven we are not in such circumstances as the Hollanders ; nor are we any subject of comparison with them. With men, whose tempers, or prejudices, incline them to dwell longest on the darkest side of things, we are, indeed, considered as a nation who have made large strides towards our own ruin. And even with others, of a less unhappy temperament, our characteristic is that of a people who will be no longer held within the bounds of laws. In proportion as this is true, there must be a wild inconsistency in our conduct ; for surely we can boast of *liberty*, no longer than we engage ourselves in defence of those laws, which are the bulwarks of it. I think we are yet *free* ; and for that very reason, I conclude, we are not quite *lawless*.

You have now given us a subject of a domestic nature, in which we are all interested, but particularly the inhabitants of London and Westminster. I will tell you, without reserve, that for my own part, it is hard to say,

say, if I feel most pain in passing the streets with regard to my own person, or from my apprehension of the danger and inconvenience to which I see my fellow-citizens exposed: and I cannot reflect, without a mournful indignation, that a people, whom I would gladly think are yet their own masters, who are certainly opulent, industrious, and ingenious, should be so thoughtless of the public welfare, and suffer so capital an evil.

Foreigners who come among us are amazed: they ask "if we reserve all our " cleanliness and convenience for our houses " and gardens only: and if we keep our " streets in so dreadful a condition, to serve " as foils to our numerous comforts, ele- " gances, and the splendid apparatus of our " grandeur within doors"? Tell them it is our immense trade which continually causes such immense quantities of dirt, and such broken irregular pavements: They answer, " the more trade you have, surely the more " capable you are of taking care of your " police. If you are that wise, industrious, " rich, free, *cleanly* people. you pretend, " why

“ why do you not shew it, in things so
“ essential to ease, pleasure, convenience
“ and security ? ”

We are now to *prove* to these foreigners, and *convince* ourselves, that we are neither blind nor stupid ; neither indigent, slovenly, nor lazy ; that our eyes are opened, and that we are in a great measure obliged to you for so serviceable an Operation. Sir, I have, with the utmost satisfaction, read your proposal and plan for paving, lighting, and cleansing the streets of the several parishes in Westminster, and County of Middlesex. Your preface points out in very persuasive and judicious terms, the dangers and inconveniences to which we are now exposed ; and reminds us that the evil is every day encreasing. Your scheme, for rectifying this abuse, in almost every essential part, appears unexceptionable. The whole, I think, is well digested, and may be carried into execution upon such free, equal, and equitable principles, as will stand the test of parliamentary examination.

A business of such universal concernment to every individual, though some difficulties should arise in the manner of conducting it, ought

ought still to be pursued with a fixed eye on the end in view. Your plan is so simple and intelligible, that it carries its own recommendation; but if any jarring interest, or little private view, too frequent in popular goverments, should arise, it would be highly dishonorable to the integrity, and common sense of the people, and their representatives, to imagine that such interest, or such views, could long obstruct so beneficial a design. Whilst we *see* and *feel*, the sad condition of the streets, it is in vain to talk of the laws already provided: The laws already enacted are ineffectual; but it does not follow that all future laws, for the purpose now in question, will be the same. We now fly for succor to the legislative power, to whose care, under providence, we have lately committed ourselves; and when your plan shall be examined, it is not to be doubted but the wisdom of parliament will suggest the means of our relief.

Presuming then that your labor will not be lost; nor yourself treated with contempt, for being a friend to your fellow-subjects, and a zealot in your country's service; give me leave to make a few remarks on your Pamphlet,

pamphlet, some of them may, perhaps, merit attention ; and, if your plan is adopted, will at least suggest matter to exercise the judgment of the commissioners. I consider these remarks as a kind of supplement to your plan ; though you will see they extend only to certain heads, which fall within the compass of my observation.

1st. It must give every well-meaning inhabitant entire satisfaction, to observe, that the tenderness you express for their rights and properties, is demonstrable in the general tenor of your plan. But they, as well as every man of common sense, must know, that a coercive power must be lodged somewhere. The decision of the representatives of the people, is always supposed to be the effect of due deliberation, and exercised most apparently for the good of the community. Such power, if compared with the blind will of one man, as in arbitrary governments, loses the name of *arbitrary* ; yet, if it is not exerted with vigor, proportioned and adapted to the wills and inclinations of the governed, the power, and the law enacted by virtue of that power, will both become a dead letter.

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It shall not be my busines, at present, to enquire how many laws are violated in this kingdom ; by whom they are chiefly trampled on ; and in what instances : My subje&t goes no higher than the safe, free passage of our streets. Even in this instance I have been often transported, to observe how happy we are ; and, at the same time, amazed to reflect what great inconveniences are submitted to, in certain instances, out of tenderness to the rights of the subje&t ; *rights*, which one would imagine no subje&t could posess, when the interest and welfare of the whole community came in competition with it ; when an adequate satisfaction is offered, not depending on the caprice or avarice of the posessor, but a just judgment of the equitable value of the thing posessed. The obje&t I have in my thoughts, falls very properly within the compass of our subje&t, *i. e.* the *police*, and free passage of the streets of Westminster, I seldom pass the narrow way by *Craig's* court, either on foot or in a carriage, without travelling back to the time I went to school. I really believe it is above four and twenty years, since I heard it said, that the old houses on the western side of this passage would be taken down, to make a wide

a wide entrance into one of the most spacious parts of the town, and particularly to the parliament-house. The value of houses, I presume, is estimated by the rent of them and their age; these in question cannot, therefore, be of *great* value: yet surely it is an object of *great* importance, that a lord-chancellor, a speaker of a house of commons, the judges, with the lords and commons, should have, not a *safe* only, but a *commodious* way to their places of assembly. It is surely an object of *great* importance, that their persons should not be in the least ruffled or discomposed; that their coaches should not be exposed to overturn; be broken by other carriages; or overwhelmed with filth.

But it may be *now* observed, that since the time I have mentioned, Westminster is become, in several parts of it, a beautiful and superb city, containing many grand edifices, and the noblest bridge in the world. This same passage at *Craig's court* is a kind of entrance, and a very bad entrance it is, to this scene of grandeur. If the legislature should have leisure to enter upon your plan, and the business of *police*; surely there can be no invincible difficulty in this affair: there can be

no *right*, but it may be provided for by the wisdom of parliament; nor is it possible the purchase of a few old houses should impoverish the nation.—To come more immediately to our subject.

*Houses, or Stones marked with the names of streets *.*

2. **W**HAT you mention, as to houses at the corner of streets being marked with the names of such streets; I join with you in thinking, that the convenience to the inhabitants will more than pay the expence in one year. It will also shew a certain tenderness and civility to strangers of our own country; and, as a commercial nation, it will demonstrate that regard for foreigners, which ought to be the practice of all civilized states. We often imitate the *French* in things of a ridiculous nature; let us follow the example of the *Parisians* in this useful instance. We have not many edifices of great consideration at the corners of streets; and if it should be objected, that there is an impropriety in marking any part of such grand building in this manner,

* Propofal, Preface, and Page 11.

manner, the stone, you recommend, may be so placed, as to occasion no kind of injury to the building.

The best manner of constructing KENNELS and CAUSEWAYS.*

3. THE next article that falls within the compass of my observation, is, the great inconvenience, I might say misfortune, we labor under in respect to our kennels. It is too well known that they are made with a sudden fall, of four, five, or six inches, and some yet deeper, like a broad cart-rut. This seems to be the remains of those days, when these cities were about one tenth part so big ; had not a twentieth part so much trade ; nor a hundredth part so many carriages for ease and luxury, as at present. It is easy to imagine that, in those days, one might go on one side of the street, through the whole extremity of the town, without passing the kennel ; but now, in *our miles of streets*, how often must we *pass, and with what uneasiness and danger !* This may be easily rectified when the streets are

* Proposal, Note, Page 4.

are new paved. The kennel ought to be constituted by the easy decline of the street, and terminated, in the division of the two equal sides, by moderate sized *denter* stones. These being set no lower than the lowest part of the kennels, as they now stand in most streets, would answer very well: perhaps in some places they need not be set so low. In this case the declension would take in only three or four inches on twenty five or thirty feet. The passing the kennels, or lowest part of the streets, would then be hardly perceived by the rider: horses would tread true, whereas the kennel is now often concealed with dirt; they would consequently be in less danger of laming themselves; of falling, or being otherwise injured. Carriages would no longer be subject to overturn; or to break their wheels by a sudden shock *. Upon this principle the collection of dirt and water would be a little more divided,

* The paviors assure me that numbers of people are sensible of this; and that some streets are formed in the manner I recommend; but as the deep kennel, with breast stones, is thought by some the most convenient for carrying down filth, those would chuse to have it, though they wish their neighbors, and all others in general, would form their streets after a different manner.

divided, yet if cleansed twice a week, as proposed, the quantity would never be great. This method would also greatly facilitate the cleansing the streets either by rain, or by the *rakers*. As to the passage or causeway, in certain parts of the streets, the large pebbles being raised three inches above the level, would answer effectually; but, if they are raised higher, as they generally are, they destroy that equality or level to which the streets ought to be kept.

Manner of paving STREETS.*

4. **M**Y fourth remark is, that we labor under great inconveniencies, in this metropolis, arising from the imperfect manner in which the pavements are generally made. Pavements should be adapted to the carriages they bear; and as ours, from an unavoidable necessity, must bear great weights, the materials made use of, and the manner of disposing them, should be proportioned. For this reason, I apprehend that, in all capital streets, no stones should be used under nine to ten inches long, and all others,

* *Proposal, Page 3.*

others totally rejected. Every particular spot should be paved with stones of near equal lengths. The foundation, as you observe, should be solid, that is, more beaten than it usually is, and upon it should be laid a covering of binding gravel, the parts of which cohere, without any mixture of clay. Upon this the stones should be all set end-ways, with a particular attention to make them meet as close as possible at the surface. The paviors allege, that they cannot *make work*, as they term it, without stones of different sizes: I presume it may be so, but the *lengths* ought to be near the same*. It is not expected that stones can be collected of equal weight and size: those from three quarters, to a hundred weight, are generally deemed the best for paving the most frequented places. Some stones are much under this weight, others are as high as three hundred. A judicious disposition of the stones or pebbles would make them all useful:

* This would be very easily carried into execution. Upon the purchase of a cargo of stones, the paviors might assort them, and consequently send them to the places where their work lay, with the proper distinctions. And where stones are already on the spot, the number of small ones they would be obliged to remove, would create no considerable expence.

useful; but the paviors ought not to jumble them all together. It is not in the nature of things, that a *short* stone, with a loose foundation, or perhaps with a hollow under it, should bear the same weight as a *long one*, well fixed in the earth. Surely the art of paving might be improved: if short stones must be used, intermixed with long ones, the short one should have a proper foundation, to bear an equal weight with the long one; I mean the foundation of another stone, otherwise there is a mystery in this affair; but mysterious as it may be represented, an examination of the streets discovers the secret. One stone cannot sit firm on another, except the under one be properly drove into the earth, and covered with gravel: but the stone which forms the surface would then have a *secure* bed and a *solid* foundation; but this is not practised. It is obvious to common observation, in the present method of paving, that the small stone first gives way, and consequently loosens all those that are round it. Thus it happens, that perverseness in *some* paviors, and the ignorance of the true principles of their art, in *others*, is the cause why one can hardly find,

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in any great street, five yards square of true even pavement, after it has been used a month. It is reasonably to believe that care and attention, with a proper inspection, would soon rectify these abuses.

I observe you recommend Thames ballast or gravelly sand *, but this has a mixture of shingle, and will not bind the stones together; whereas the sand of the Thames, and, I believe, yellow sand will serve as a kind of cement, not easily to be washed out. One may also observe, that the paviors are often deficient in the use of their *rammer*, the stones not being sufficiently beaten down into their bed or foundation: and to render the pavement less durable, the covering of common gravel, which they lay on it, is seldom suffered to remain a proper time.

The next consideration is the true level of the streets. If they are made uneven the weight of carriages coming with a fall on the lowest part, must frustrate the design of good pavements. These risings and fallings also deform the face of the street, and ought by no means to be permitted. The inspection you have provided for, through the

* Proposal, page 3.

commissioners and surveyors, will prevent any abuse of this kind: I am sure it can be of no real service to any person who should idly attempt to build his pavement higher than that of his neighbor. It must be acknowledged, that the observance of these simple rules will cost a little more in the first instance; but it is equally obvious that this method must be considerably the cheapest in the issue. It ought therefore to be expected that every individual who is by the proposed plan obliged to make good the pavements before his own doors, will most heartily conform to the rules prescribed *.

F O O T - W A Y .

5. **T**HE fifth article I recommend to your second thoughts, is, how best to provide for the convenience of those who walk. There are now *some* places paved only with very small pebbles, and *others* where the broad as well as the small purbeck stones

* I think you will be every where understood to mean, that particular places, provided for by particular acts, and kept in proper order, are not included in your plan.

are defective: The repair of these, in the minutest parts, ought to be an object of attention, as well as the pavement of the most capital streets. We must reflect at the same time, that if *much* is attempted, whether *any thing* will be executed, or any thing to the purpose? The raising of pavements after the manner of *Northumberland House** must be acknowledged the most beautiful; but the narrowness of our streets, and the nature of our buildings, seem to render this method impracticable, except in new built streets. It must be further observed, that if these raised ways are narrow, passengers will be subject to slip off, and consequently be exposed to great danger from carriages. This does not hinder but that the foot-way might be raised, in many places, two or three inches, to the advantage of the passenger, and the great utility of the inhabitant: yet I do not think this is an object worthy of parliamentary enquiry at present, especially if it should occasion the least obstruction of the main end in view.

The use of posts †, which I believe is peculiar to us, is an excellent security to the

* Proposal, note page 4. † Ditto.

foot passenger, and the modern method of making them short, and stout, is a great improvement †. It is true they occupy a considerable space, but if, we compare the streets of London with those of Paris, this distinction seems, upon the comparison, to carry with it a *kind* of proof, that we are a *free* people, and that the French are *not* *so*.

† It is much to be wished that a *new fashion* would prevail, or a *new law* be made, in consequence of which every shop-keeper might place his *sign* on these *posts*. Several, I observe, have already done it, and find it the cheapest, safest, and most agreeable method. The general practice at present is absurd, not to say vain, and ridiculous. If *signs* were placed on *posts*, and confined to a certain moderate size and height, and kept nearly in a line, shops would be found equally the same as they are now: but if the contrary should be objected, to make openings, every fourth or fifth sign might be erected two or three feet above the rest, and make a shew as of standards in a squadron of cavalry. It would add much to the beauty and appearance of streets; it would save a great expence; it would prevent danger to houses, from the weight of wood and iron projected from them, as the signs now stand; and as they would not be so much exposed to the wind, they would not offend so much by a creaking noise; and consequently afford more pleasure and satisfaction to the inhabitant. If *ever* this scheme should take place, the *signs* must be erected higher than the proposed lamps, so as not to obstruct the light.

so. The *Gentleman*, as well as the *Mechanic*, who walks the streets of *Paris*, is continually in danger of being run over, by every careless or imperious coachman, of whom there are many; and in fact these accidents frequently happen in that city, in so much that few people of distinction ever walk in the streets.

For the convenience of those who walk, we may farther consider how best to prevent their being molested by horses throwing up dirt. Some parts of *Cheapside*, *Pallmall* in general, and some of the new streets stand best as they are now made, that is, raised in the middle; because in most of them there is breadth sufficient for carriages to go free of the kennels on each side; but where-ever this is not practicable, the decline made to the middle part of the street, already mentioned *, appears the most eligible. But the manner of paving, if not particularly pointed out by law, after a proper survey is made, may depend on the majority of voices of the commissioners in their respective parishes. If any law is made for the convenience of the people, regard ought also

* Page 14.

to be had to the cellars, or subterraneous habitations of the poor. Here the commissioners might exercise their tenderness, but not at the risk of every passenger breaking his neck. There are also some flat iron-grates, over cellars and kitchens, in a very decayed state, the owners of which ought, for the safety of passengers, to make them good.

*Breaking up PAVEMENTS by the
Companies of Water-Works *.*

IT is a fact, the most notorious, that great inconveniencies arise from the breaking up of pavements by the companies of water-works. I am very glad to find, by your plan, that they are laid under restrictions, and the method how they are to act prescribed to them. They cannot think it any hardship to be subject to prosecution, if the pavements they break up, are not restored to their true state, and made perfectly good again. It is obvious to every common observer, that the breaking of their pipes, often destroys in a week, a pavement

* Proposal page 6.

which

which might otherwise stand twenty years. In discoursing upon this subject, the conversation afforded me some amusement, and perhaps it may furnish some *useful hints* to others. "O lord, Sir," says my companion, shrewd enough in his way, "don't think about " it; 'tis a very foolish thing for any gentleman " to give himself any trouble about. Ever " since I was a boy of two feet and a half " high, I have known people, gentlemen " of long heads, talk of paving streets; but " it can't be done, sir. 'Tis impossible, sir; " indeed, sir, it is. I'll give you leave to " cut off my head; I will lay it on a block " in the place of lord Lovet, if ever it " is brought to bear." I interrupted his harangue, and asked him, " Pray, friend, " why do you believe the thing is impracticable, I should be glad to hear your " reasons." " Why, sir," replyed he, " I " will tell you. In the first place, all the " pavements of the streets are made accord- " ing to every man's humor; some are " made high, and some low; some with " kennels, and some without; some well " done, and some ill. But this is not all, " sir: 'tis the *Water-works* which destroy the

“ the pavements ; and do you think that
 “ ever that will be mended ? why, sir, the
 “ owners of the water-works are most of
 “ them parliament-men, the heads of the
 “ parliament, sir, all great men ! Do you
 “ think that any body will be able to *oblige*
 “ *them* to repair the pavements they break
 “ up, whether they are laid down again,
 “ well or ill ? I advise you, sir, not to give
 “ yourself any trouble about it. 'Tis true,
 “ I am speaking against my own interest,
 “ but I am sure it can't be done.” Is this
 the true language of an Englishman, learned
 or illiterate ? I hope we shall find the
 directors of the water-works, not only as
 subject to law, as any other members of the
 community ; but also as well disposed to
 advance the interest of it.

*Means of preserving the PAVE-
 MENTS *.*

IT is certainly not sufficient that we pro-
 vide good pavements, unless we provide
 also the means of preserving them. I ob-
 serve you are aware of this difficulty, and

* Proposal, page 7.

have been cautious, even beyond the bounds of what, I apprehend, is practicable. We have very good reason to believe, from the constancy which the House of Commons has demonstrated, that notwithstanding the great repugnance of waggoners, and others of their class, the scheme of broad wheels must at length take place, though these people should be *compelled* to use them; or by degrees be reduced to draw with *one* horse only, if they *will* use *narrow* wheels. Indeed, I apprehend, that the use of broad wheels, is the only expedient, by which we can arrive at the happiness of seeing good roads, and enjoying the great advantages of them. As there seems to be an almost unavoidable necessity, arising from the state of our commerce, domestic and foreign, to convey considerable burthens from place to place: As it is also evident from a long experience, that we must never expect good roads, *at any expence*, whilst we draw great weights with narrow wheels: and lastly, as it is demonstrable, both in *theory* and *practice*, that *broad* wheels will *answer* the purpose; it seems to be our duty to conclude, that the legislature will at length compleat this excellent

cellent design ; though it should be a work of some expence, not yet calculated ; and of more time than was at first imagined.

Thus, you see that I agree with you in sentiments upon the subject of broad wheels in general. But because the road-waggons will necessarily create a considerable demand of wood proper for these broad wheels, therefore, I imagine, it will not be practicable, to provide such quantities of this kind of wood, as to confine the carts in town, to wheels of wood only. We must reflect that the pavements would unavoidable wear it away very fast, and the expence of it might become, if not so great a grievance, as some represent, yet a charge too heavy to bear.

If the wheels of these town carts and waggons are made nine inches broad, certain of them, which have been hitherto indulged in the use of iron, may be allowed a streak of this metal at the edges of their fellys, not exceeding two, or two and a half inches broad ; and this iron being made a little rounding at the edges, and under a quarter of an inch thick can do no great mischief. Some such rule, with a little distinction, ought, perhaps, to extend to all the carriages which

D 2 bring

bring supplies of all the necessaries of life to these great cities. It might be happy also if these waggons and carts were confined to certain weights, for each respectively, particularly coal-carts; not so confined, as to afford any matter of just complaint, but that those who delight in frustrating the intention of *good laws*, may not pass with impunity for want of a *law* to correct them.

The perusal of your plan has induced me, more than once, to enter into conversation with master-paviors: some of these alledge, for they do not all speak the same language, that it is not a steady weight, however great, but the rattling of coaches, particularly hackney coaches, which loosens the stones and destroys the pavements. But, with their good leave, I believe that common sense, and experience, will prove the fallacy of this doctrine, at least in part. On the roads the wheels of carriages press the solid foundation, and go near upon a level; whereas were pavements made mathematically true, and all possible art employed to make them perfect; yet as they must be constructed on a decline, or in an oblique manner, one need not be a great natural philosopher to know, from

from the universal law of gravitation, that the pressure must necessarily be on the lowest side. And if the streets must be made rounding, that is, high in the middle, and low in the sides; or, highest on the sides, and low in the middle, the pavement must suffer, if it is not soon destroyed. For let us suppose a road-waggon with nine-inch wheels, drawn with eight horses, according to the act as it now stands, (which will be very inconvenient *in the streets*) is it not highly reasonable to believe, that these waggons will some times draw from three to four tons in weight? *On the road* they will infallibly make use of nine horses, because it is *one* more than the law allows. Will our pavements be able to support so prodigious a burthen in the double action of progressive and oblique motion, granting that the wheels will play a little on the axle-tree? Will it not even endanger the breaking in our very vaults in *some* streets, and in *others* weaken the foundations of houses? This supposition of three to four tuns, can hardly be thought extravagant, since they may even exceed this weight; and, I believe, few persons would engage, that no waggoner should ever try the experiment, what ~~mis~~ chief

chief he could do. There is a strange perverseness reigns in some ranks of men amongst us ; and we have proof of the impatience of waggoners under any controll, however beneficial in its nature and tendency. They desire to have things after their own manner only, however inconvenient to the rest of the community. Thus, even in the manner of making the broad wheels ; the design and intention of the legislature is defeated by some waggoners : I have seen nine-inch wheels made with the sides of the fellys turned up near an inch, the weight consequently resting on the center, which is foreign to the notion of a roller.

Perhaps it would be complained of as a great grievance, were the road-waggons, upon entering the town, to be confined to draw with three horses only : the expence of taking out the greatest part of their load, and carrying it to their inn, in carts, would necessarily fall on the consumer : and to what amount might this expence be ? To draw half a tun for a mile would not exceed four or five shillings, which is not a penny *per* stone : If we suppose the distance to be only half so far, it is not a halfpenny ; and if

we

we calculate on their taking out only half their loading, to carry it half a mile; then upon an avarage, the expence would not reach a farthing *per* stone. This expence could never be an object of any consistent representation, much less a real grievance: it might, at first, be attended with some inconvenience, till proper stands were found where they might unload; but, on the whole, it would relieve their tired horses, and save the wear of their waggon on a ruined pavement; consequently it would be extremely beneficial to waggoners themselves, as well as to all others. It would create a fresh employment for car-men, who would consequently be always ready, on these occasions, to convey goods to the inns, whence the proper clerk sends them to their proprietors. The advantages accruing to the public are beyond dispute. The expence it would save the inhabitants in repairing their pavements, and the convenience it would afford to every individual, are obvious beyond contradiction. Perhaps the consideration of this article does most properly belong to the wheel-act; but this last cannot be compleated, and carried into execution, in all its parts, near so soon as
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the streets may be paved * ; and I am sure it is intimately connected with the preservation of the pavements. If any regulation of this kind takes place, and surely it ought to take place immediately, with regard to narrow-wheel'd waggons as well as others, upon the plan you now propose, I presume these will be subject to the inspection of the commissioners and surveyors, who must take proper care to see the laws duly executed. If this is not done ; to desire a new law, of this nature, however beneficial ; is desiring the prostitution of the legislature, and the sacrifice of the public interest to the caprice of a few private men, who are determined to *judge* for themselves.

Water-Spouts.

WHAT further regards the preservation of the pavements, as well as the convenience of passengers, are the water-spouts projecting from the houses. If I am not misinformed, there is an act in force by which we are obliged to build with parapet walls ; and from the gutters which these

* In what time all the streets can be paved, must depend on the number of proper paviors to be found : observing the old maxim, *that the more haste oftentimes the worse speed.*

these form, to convey the water which falls from the heavens, through pipes of lead or wood, down the side of houses. But as there are yet many old houses, which will require time and expence to rectify in this instance; I apprehend two or three months time should be given for this purpose, more than merely for repairing the pavements, before the offenders be subject to prosecution.

PIPES for watering STREETS.*

FOR the greater pleasure and advantage of walking the streets in summer; and still more, for the importance of extinguishing fire; your proposal of a pipe, or pipes, to be laid into the mean pipe of the water-works, and to be fixed in each street in the inside of one or more of the pedestals of your lamps, ought, I think, to have a place in the bill. The expence would be repaid to the inhabitants, in keeping their shops and houses clean in the summer; and greatly facilitate the preservation of them in case of fire.

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LIGHTING

* Proposal, Page 11.

LIGHTING *the* STREETS*.

THE manner in which you propose to light the streets by lamps, admits of no comment; at least none from my pen; for I do not conceive that any rational objection can be raised against it. What insolences people are exposed to in the evening, and at night, even in so public a place as the *Strand*, many have had sad experience. It may be presumed, that the remedy you propose, will in some measure, prevent such extravagancies; as well as afford pleasure, and convenience, to every passenger, on foot or in carriages. And can it be suspected, that any *nobleman*, or *gentleman*, will stand up to oppose the public interest, because he has a lamp or two at his own door? According to your plan, he will no longer have occasion for such lamps; but if he chuses to have them, he will enjoy so much the more light than he did before, and shine the more distinguished. And with what a pleasure will he reflect, that his friends, and fellow-citizens, those who can, and those who cannot, ride in coaches, will be so much

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* Proposal, Page 9.

the less subject to be plundered; to tremble with a pistol at their breast; or to lose their lives by villains, under the shelter of darkness.

WATCHMEN*.

THO' my letter is by no means intended as a treatise on the subject of *Police* in general, I find myself insensibly led into a wider field than I at first imagined your proposal would conduct me. Perhaps the remark I am about to make, has been made, by almost every body who have given themselves the trouble to make *any remark at all*; that although, for the most part, we abhor the notion of being defended by soldiers, under any denomination, in time of peace; yet we are often in *need* of defence, particularly in the evening and night, against villains who live by plunder. The notion of a watchman, I apprehend, includes the idea of a man who is hired by the civil magistrate, to act as a civil officer, in a military capacity: he is to defend or attack, with such arms as are entrusted in his hands, as the exigencies of the case may require. He is to suffer no insult, or other injury, to be done to any person passing

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* *Proposal*, Page 10.

the streets ; nor any attempt to break into the houses of the inhabitants. As the number of these men is more limited, than in a similar case in the military service ; they ought to be the more vigilant and attentive to their duty : yet, I know not by what kind of corruption, or false reasoning, men who by age or infirmity are no longer fit to serve in the army, are made *Watchmen*. Hence it follows, that the very name is a term of ridicule. If we had *no* watchmen, we should have *more* villainies committed in our streets ; but, if we had *more able* watchmen, who should be also more narrowly inspected, we should not have *near so many*. If then, a more judicious choice of watchmen was made, and their wages, in some parishes, a little augmented, it would be a great improvement of our *police*, and a great safeguard against many outrages, which *now* pass with impunity. I am sensible that men, in the prime of life, will seldom serve in this office ; and that those who are proof against the tricks of thieves, pick-pockets, and common prostitutes, are yet more rare : but still there is a difference among men in every state, and money will make men honest, at least in practice, as well as make them rogues ; therefore,

fore, I believe, it will be acknowledged, that it is in our power to rectify this evil, in some measure, without paying for it more than it is worth.

CLEANSING STREETS*.

WITH respect to cleansing the streets, I must take notice, that the scavengers ought to *be responsible men*, † and very regular contracts made with them, to the spirit and letter of which they ought to be strictly kept. The rakers ought also to be compelled, when their load is compleated, or so near it as to be subject, by the motion of their cart, to throw out dirt, to have proper coverings to their carts. This may be done by two or three boards to run in a groove, which may be easily made close enough to confine the dirt, the last board at the tail having a cross piece at the end, to prevent the dirt finding a passage out at that place. If these boards cannot be accommodated, the rakers should be obliged to use falling doors, with hinges to the sides of their carts, to rest on parts prepared for them at the head

* Propofal, Page 7.

† I have heard it objected, that there are none such, but this is not *credible* : pay for it so that a *gain* may arise, there is no fear of the rest.

head and tail. If these doors were made, each in two parts, and to fold with hinges, they might answer best, as they would be in the way neither of their own wheels, nor of the wheels of any other carriage. The want of a regulation of this kind, is surely one of the greatest absurdities that ever prevailed in the *Police* of a civilized state ; for the rakers, not only drop near a quarter part of their dirt, and render a street, perhaps already cleansed, in many spots very filthy ; but it subjects every coach, and every passenger, of what quality soever, to be overwhelmed with whole cakes of dirt, at every accidental jolt of the cart ; of which many have had a most filthy experience.

Before we take our leave of the pavements and streets, we may recollect, that it has been long complained of, as a great deficiency in our *police*, that brewers drays are permitted to go about our streets through the whole day. The breadth of these, and the tedious stands they make, distinguish them from all other carriages. Is it not reasonable to presume, that if they were confined to the hour of twelve, or one, whatever may be alledged to the contrary, they might dispatch their business ? *Order* and *method* are wonderful

ful things in the execution of all affairs ; and though one brewer should supply twenty houses in a day ; in the space of four or five hours in the winter, and as early as they please in the summer, their business might be performed. Perhaps some new arrangement of their oeconomy may become necessary, particularly with regard to the time their men are said to spend in loitering, and tipling, at public houses, where they deliver beer. To this may be added, that the brewers should be obliged, when they unload butts of beer, to put them into their cellars, each butt as they unload. The same rule should be observed in loading empty butts on their drays. The want of *Police*, in this instance, is a great nuisance ; for, as the case now stands, there are very frequent, tedious, and unnecessary interruptions of passengers, even in the principal streets. Brewers would receive no real prejudice, if a clause was inserted to prevent this abuse ; since it cannot be imagined they have any particular satisfaction in countenancing their dray-men, to obstruct the passage of all his majesty's other subjects, who walk the streets. I have also known some instances of their stopping carriages ; and *obliging* gentlemen to turn about,

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and this in the evening, when it was already dark.

Cleansing the Foot-way.

AND now we are upon the article of cleansing, I may venture to ask, if the inhabitants of every house should not be obliged to have the footway, before their own dwelling, constantly swept and cleansed every morning? It is doing but half the business of cleanliness to sweep dirt from the foot-way to the pavement; yet I do not apprehend any other method to be practicable; unless a raker was appointed to take his rounds every morning, with a covered wheel-barrow, to remove the nuisance of the foot-way. In either case the advantages arising to the *whole* community, would abundantly repay the labor of the individual.

The ELECTION of COMMISSIONERS.*

THE election of commissioners by the inhabitants, you seem to have left unexplained. Elections are sometimes no other than

* Proposal, Page 17, 18.

than tumultuous assemblies of idle persons. I imagine no man will be very solicitous for an office where he can possibly gain nothing, directly, or indirectly ; hardly the pleasure of hearing an oratorical harangue. The cleansing streets is but a dirty subject ; but who can tell what the humor may be hereafter ? We may become *Police* mad ; and as we are at present most supinely nasty in our streets, it may become the fashion, for every one to strive who shall contribute most to keep them clean.

I cannot avoid taking particular notice, that you are extremely guarded in respect to the vestry's electing your commissioners, and I guess the reason. Though I never had any great inclination to interest myself in the quarrels of other men, unless I had an opportunity of hearing both sides of a question, curiosity lately invited me, to look into a pamphlet wrote against a certain vestry. I thought I discovered in it, the spirit of prejudice and acrimony ; and from thence was inclined to think, that probably the writer might be in the *wrong*. I have been since assured, by a very honest man of *that vestry*, that although one of their officers had not been exact in keeping a proper account of

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the disposal of a certain sum of money, yet no villainy was suspected by those who were immediately interested to detect it, if they had entertained any jealousy ; and, that such evil cannot happen again, because, a method and rule is now prescribed, how the officer is to keep his account in all similar cases.

I am also sensible, that a vulgar prejudice has prevailed, that so many *vestry-men* are so many *thieves*. But if we consider how numerous their body is ; how much they are a check on each other ; that they are chiefly composed of the most reputable tradesmen ; and that some of the greatest personages in the kingdom, are in some parishes, of the fraternity, though it is confessed, they attend only upon some particular occasions : when this, I say, is duly considered, such notions ought to be treated as weak and puerile. That vestries are societies of *beatified spirits*, must not be expected in *these days* ; but to consider men, as they *are*, I am really of opinion this prejudice has been handed down from *earlier times* ; and though corruption triumphs undisguised in *some places*, yet in *others* much less of it is found than in former times. Of the last I take vestries to be one, and therefore I am not

not for excluding them a share, at least, of the election in question.

The gentlemen of the vestry, in which the church-wardens are included, must be supposed to have the most experience in parish-business, and to know the parishioners. Let seven of these, elected from their own body, call in to their assistance, six gentlemen, and six shop-keepers, the oldest men they can think of, not exceeding sixty-five, who are house-keepers, and have lived at least two years in the parish. If, for instance, *forty* commissioners are wanted ; let these vestry-men, gentlemen, and tradesmen, make a list of *fifty*, or more, and acquaint them all, by the church-wardens, in the order the list may stand, so that if none decline the office, which can be hardly imagined, the church-wardens may stop at the fortieth ; otherwise, go on till the number is compleated. And if there is yet a deficiency, a further election by the nineteen persons above-mentioned may be made, to supply such deficiency. Thus the business may be done, I imagine, without noise, intrigue, or cabal. But, in order to preserve the equality, with regard to our common liberty; and also the plan you seem to a-

dopt; the next year let the vestry chuse other seven of their body, and call in six gentlemen and six tradesmen, *next in age*, none to be under twenty one at any time, to make choice of new commissioners, keeping for this second year, half the number of the commissioners of the preceding year. The third year, other seven vestry men, six gentlemen, and six tradesmen, will make the list, preserving still one third of the number of the youngest in the commission; and this rule may continue *down*, till you go *up* again to the *elders*, or oldest gentlemen and shop keepers in the parish. I think, if some such rule is adopted, it will become familiar; and every set of commissioners will emulate their predecessors, in improving the *Police*, so far as the laws impower them to act. You see my scheme is of a pacific nature: the less noise, the more business is generally done: and whilst you consult for the good of the community in *one* view, it is certainly your business to avoid *every* advance which may tend to injure it in *another*. As a civil and oeconomical concern no ways regarding the state, it may be presumed no difficulty can offer; but let who will appoint the commissioners, if the thing *is* to

to be done, commissioners must be appointed who will *see* the law executed.

This brings me to another consideration of no less moment. I trust in the **wisdom** of the legislature; and, as things appear to me at present, I hope, with all my heart, that the general tenor and purpose of your plan will take place: but, give me leave to observe, that when commissioners are elected, for one year, or two, they must by no means be subject to have their province invaded, so I call it, by any other, who may *occasionally* think proper to take the office on him. Where there has been no choice of the inhabitants, the interposition of the *greatest* lord, or the *meanest* commoner; a man of *very large* property, or one of *no* property at all, would be equally *unconstitutional*. As an office which is not to be in the least lucrative, every commissioner ought to be the more jealous of his honor; not only with regard to the discharge of his duty in this office; but to repel the least incroachment upon the liberty of it; as much as if it was an office of the greatest moment: indeed, if it is established by *law*, and the *free* votes of the electors, it is as sacred as any other office.

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I am sensible of the integrity of your design, but if any indifferent person claims a seat with the elected commissioners, such a procedure, if I know any thing of Englishmen, would create disgust and confusion; and if it was submitted to, would soon bring on the very mischiefs which you intend to prevent. I should be extremely sorry to be singular in this way of thinking. The office of your proposed commissioners, will be of great utility to the public; and in some measure a kind of nursery of men of business. And because it is the *fashion* of the times, to follow the loaves and fishes with a voracious appetite; this office, which will not afford more than a glass of pure element, if duly discharged will be the more honorable. I do not doubt but there is virtue enough remaining, to induce a number of proper persons to accept of the employment, without hesitation †.

I join

† Should it not be inserted in the oath, (Proposal, page 17) to execute the trusts, &c. *So long as my private concerns will permit of my attendance?* Otherwise, the true execution of a trust seems to be of very doubtful meaning, as the subsequent paragraph, which is upon your plan, makes appear.

I join with you in thinking, that if the commissioners elected, or any of them, neglect the business of their office, after they have accepted of it, their electors should have the power of chusing others. But lest this should open any field for humor or caprice, contrary, perhaps, to the interest of the electors themselves; after three times non-attendance, proper notice should be given in writing, to ask the reason of it; and then to act as the discretion of the majority of the commissioners, being not less than a board of twenty-one of them, shall direct.

General reflections on the foregoing Subject.

IF there is any parish already provided for by law, whose streets are *effectually* paved, cleansed, and lighted, upon a principle satisfactory to the parishioners, there may be some reason for the Inhabitants of it, to desire that they may not be included in any new law. I fear there is no such parish; I am persuaded there is not *one* but would receive great benefit by adopting the plan you recommend. If their system is indeed *better* than yours, it might be

be wished, they would recommend it to you: if it is not *so good*; if it does not stand upon so stable a foundation, why should they be repugnant to change for a better? It may be, that they have not yet examined your proposal, and apprehend it will abridge their power: if so, they mistake the matter. If the parliament gives them the choice of their own commissioners, is it not still preserving the power in their hands? They will have the *power* of answering the intention of the law; the *power* of consulting, not for the general ease and safety only, in opposition to their own, but as connected and interwoven with it.

As every parish must consist of variety of kinds of streets; if some general plan is not adopted (except where provision is made for any particular square) there cannot be that *method* and *uniformity*, as will answer the purpose of the legislature, for the common good of the inhabitants. Upon the whole, it seems to be no more than common justice to the inhabitants of the respective parishes, to expect they will treat your plan with *moderation*, even where it may *seem* to clash with their particular interest or inclination;

clination; and so far as it is apparently calculated for the *public good*, with *candor* and *respect*: We are now amusing ourselves with notions, concerning what *we* apprehend to be *right*, but the decision I hope will rest on the wisdom of the parliament.

**CONCLUSION of the proper Subject
of this Letter.**

HOW many and what kind of difficulties you will meet in the prosecution of this affair, I am not a proper judge. I suppose, as all men are *rational Beings*, and the exercise of that *reason* the glory of their nature: as a free state cannot exist, without a large portion of public love dwelling in the minds of those who compose that state; therefore, whether I have experience of the *times* or not, I must draw this conclusion, that your proposal will meet a favorable reception.

Many *good* designs are continually carried into execution. The hearts of *all* the people are not influenced by motives of a vicious self-interest: There does not *always* exist objects of this kind, sufficient to absorb

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every sentiment of love and regard to the public welfare. And how often does the private interest of individuals coincide with that of the community ?

Whatever grounds of *just* complaint there may be ; to say we are *ever* repugnant to designs calculated for the public utility, not only contradicts *fact*, but such *notions* can never be advanced without producing some of those *evils*, which the zeal they are supposed to include, when properly employed, bids fairest to prevent. If men are conscious of a total disrelish or disinclination to promote the public welfare, common shame should induce them to conceal from the eye of the world, that poverty and narrowness of soul, from whence such dispositions proceed. If they are *not* conscious of such a *cast* of thought, why should they not suppose many of their neighbors as virtuous as themselves, and as ready to promote the common interest ? It is a fault which men of a sprightly genius, warm temper, and good heart, often fall into, to *complain too much*. They *mean well*, but they are apt to forget that *perseverance* and *time* brings all things to maturity.

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Let us then indulge the belief, that the time is come in which your proposal, will meet applause, and be so regulated by the wisdom of parliament, as to be carried *effectually* into execution. Other nations, who have not the reputation of thinking so much, or so closely as we do; who are far behind us in wealth; in the knowledge of every art; of every science; and yet far exceed us in *practical police*. It is true, the rules they observe can never be an exact model to us; not from their different genius only, but that *they* live under arbitrary governments; have less trade and arts of luxury; are not assembled in such prodigious multitudes in one place; and from indigence joined to a habit of temperance, their *consumption* is extremely short of ours.

The part you have taken deserves the sincere thanks of every well-wisher of his country. The progress you have already made in this *excellent*, I will add, *important* design, is already a proof of future success. I need not say, *Go on!* You know your cause stands on its own merit; and I think its utility will support it. Was it in my power to do the public, or you, any ser-

vice, I would gladly embrace the occasion. Whatever is of a *beneficial* nature, is, for that reason, *honorable*, and the *true* object of our thoughts. As to all other contests or labors, for wealth or power, the chief object of which is not the happiness of individuals, as connected with the general good, they are meer phantoms. We do not *all heartily believe* this, till the *closing scene*; but *then* we must *all yield* to this *important truth*.

Whilst we see all the *great world* alive in *dress*, in *equipage*, in pursuit of public and private diversions, with every *splendid*, every *gay* amusement, it would be absurd to think, that a *small* contribution for a *beneficial* design will be wanting: if there was occasion for a *very large* one, and the expence of those diversions were pleaded in excuse, what should we say? Yet I believe, that in the wear of coaches, carts and horses, the expence of the pavement will be saved in less than one year. Perhaps my opinion may clash with experience, and common received notions; but as the pursuits, I have just mentioned, must be cheap in the sight of the *aged*, and the *thoughtful*; and, in

in some degree, glut even the *young* and *gay* by a dull repetition ; there is some reason to hope for a happy change of the *fashion*. From the love of *rare* things, we may become more generally virtuous, and more sincere lovers of our country.

LONDON and WESTMINSTER compared in certain particulars.

THE City of London is generally esteemed *superior* to that of Westminster. As the center of commerce, containing the Bank, and all the public buildings which relate to our commercial connexions, it must in one light retain that *superiority*. But, as *pleasure* is no less courted than *profit*, we must not be surprized to see her yield, in many respects, to Westminster and her appendages. The situation of the latter, is rather more encircled by the Thames ; her noble buildings are more open to view ; her streets are more spacious, and her squares more magnificent. We must also recollect, that Westminster enjoys the advantage of the residence of the Sovereign, and the seats of judicature ; a delightful extended

tended park, with a grand avenue from the noblest bridge in this, or perhaps in any other country in the world. Thus if *London* does not keep pace with her, in such respects as are practicable and interesting, so far as these cities have a separate interest, *Westminster* bids fairest to excel. But if fame does not deceive, the citizens of *London* have at length wisely determined to relieve their antient bridge of its ponderous incumbrances; and open an entrance, worthy the grandeur of that city, to her suburbs, and the counties adjacent. This will be of great utility to the public, as well as advance their private interest. I am also assured, that the magistrates of *London*, will no longer be *idle*, nor, as they surely have been in this respect, *cruel* spectators of the loss of so many of their fellow-citizens *, by the destructive fall of water under that bridge.

As

* In the course of some hundred years we may reckon several thousand persons lost, to the great prejudice of the state, and the reproach of the rulers of it. It is amazing that no remedy was ever provided, to prevent this evil. If an officer had been appointed to attend, and to ring a bell when vessels and boats *might* pass, with safety; and to hang out a flag, in a convenient

As a farther good policy, to retain the greater portion of traffic, with regard to Westminster; and to promote, at the same time, the general advantage of all his majesty's subjects; it seems to be a matter of no doubt, that a *third* bridge will at length be built, inferior only in *cost* to that of *Westminster*. This will make us a more compact body. As a natural consequence of this measure, clean, elegant, and convenient buildings, will arise, where, on the north side, now stand only ruined houses, uninhabited for the most part, and, in the south, as bad tenements or an open field. It is not that I wish to see more inhabitants in these cities; we are already so numerous a body of people, that amidst all our power and affluence, *for want of Police*, we sometimes see human nature in the utmost disgrace *.

But

venient place, when they *might not* pass; many a life would have been saved. And if the law had enjoined pecuniary mulcts on those who should trespass on this regulation, it would soon have become familiar; the people would have been contented, and thought *that a* good law which should be thus calculated to save their lives.

* In the city of London I believe such misfortunes do not happen; but in Westminster, and the adjacent parishes, instances are known, I hope not many, that boys and

But my pleasure is, to think, that even the present generation may behold these sister-cities, the wonder of nations, and hear it confessed by foreigners. If new houses are built for the rich, the better habitations will fall to the share of the poor ; and consequently there will be fewer marks of indigence and misery. I am sure there are a vast number of houses, particularly in the northern extremities of *London*, which exhibit a lively scene of complicated wretchedness.

For bad pavements, * and I believe I may add

and girls of eight or ten years of age, and some much older, in all the trappings of misery, to our great scandal, have perished in the streets, with sickness, thirst, and hunger, like starved cats or dogs.

* There is one reason, of very great weight, in favor of the proposal for paving the streets, which I have not mentioned in its proper place. It is a truth which no one will contest, that the present generation is become more tender and delicate, than their ancestors. So far from ladies of *fashion* breakfasting on *roast-beef*, you see their meanest domestics, with an effeminate air, sipping the infusion of a certain bitter leaf, which is brought from the remote country of *China*. But as the persons of our females are of a finer texture, their minds also require a different kind of nourishment than in the days of *health and simplicity* : they cannot spend long winter-evenings

filth also, *London* has little to boast of over her sister *Westminster*; and there seems to be
one

evenings in preparing thread for the loom: if they go to church once on the sabbath, it cannot be expected, *whilst the present fashion prevails*, that even on this day they should read religious books. To consider things as they really are, provision must be made for their *diversion*. It is necessary to their happiness, which the most obdurate cannot regard with a total indifference, to furnish them with *amusements*, much the greatest part of which must be sought for *abroad*. Without these our finest people, *of both sexes*, would *droop* and *languish*. Would we confine them *home* by bad pavements? Alas, the experiment is vain. Preserve them then *in their own way*. Now let us observe, and upon my word I am very serious, one of these delicate females; suppose her some months gone with child; let the vehicle she rides in have the advantage of springs, which many have not: if they are not *innumerable*, let us count how many *shocks* this fine creature must encounter, between *Grosvenor-square* and *Drury-lane*; or, which I think of no less consequence, between *Leaden-hall-street* and *Covent-garden*. Moderate motion is said to be of service, but what real *anguish* and *distress*, are often occasioned by the *violent* and *sudden* *shocks* which these ladies suffer from bad pavements! How many a noble heir has been lost: how many worthy merchants deprived of their hopes of continuing their wealth to their own children! We may be well assured, that more misfortunes of this kind happen, than are observed even by the parties themselves: they complain of many;

one abominable omission in *Police*, chargeable to the account of London. There is no regulation for pulling down old houses, after they become uninhabitable, at least they are suffered to be the rendezvous of thieves ; and at last to fall of themselves, to the great distress of whole neighborhoods, and sometimes to bury passengers in their ruins. How much then

and many, *I humbly presume*, are not acknowledged, lest it should occasion a future restraint on their liberty. The women themselves are best qualified to give an account of this matter ; and it is no *uncommon* thing to hear young ladies of the greatest honor and delicacy, make heavy complaints. Are not fathers, husbands, children, brothers, and all the tender relations of human life, deeply interested in the subject before us ? Will any one *dare* to laugh when I say this ? We must *change* the *nature*, at least the *customs* of our women, or provide better for their ease : nor is it the women only ; the Aged, and the Valetudinary of both sexes, call for relief ; and surely, *whatever forsakes us*, let us preserve the character of *humane*, though all the coach-makers should rise in arms against us. Women, in all countries, have a greater share in the government of them, than is level to vulgar observation : I would gladly engage *their voices*, and *their entreaties*, in favor of your proposal. But no body can accuse me of adulation ; I am rather ashamed that this thought did not occur to me sooner, that I might have given it fairer play ; and treated it with *all* the respect it deserves.

then were it to be wished, that the civil magistrates of that opulent city, ever renowned for their humanity and tenderness for their fellow-citizens, would have an eye to the regulation of this part of useful oeconomy. If their own authority is insufficient, surely they might obtain a power from the legislature, not only to pull such houses down, but in close confined places, or streets remote from the chief scenes of business and manufacture, to purchase the ground, on a due valuation, and leave it unoccupied. Thus they would provide for the health of their city, and, in a course of years, recover it entirely from its ancient meanness, and render it beautiful and convenient.

I could not suppress my inclination, at the close of my letter, to say thus much. The subject is not foreign to my purpose: though it is not directly aimed at the *point* in view, it has the same general tendency. I am too much a citizen of the world, not to be interested equally for both cities; and though I should not, in my time, see *every good work* of this kind carried into execution, *hope* and *expectation* are not the less pleasing passions; and the contemplation of what *posterity* may enjoy,

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enjoy, is next to the enjoyment in one's own person. I am,

S I R,

Westminster,
Dec. 20. 1754.

Your most obedient Servant,

Jonas Hanway.





POSTSCRIPT.

UPON a further reading of your proposal, and my own remarks on it, I cannot commit my letter to the examination of the public without some further observations.

There seems to be as great necessity for fixing the manner of executing the business in question, with regard to the *expence* of it, as there is of compleating the thing itself. In my speculations on the subject, I suppose the legislature exerting itself, for the good of the community, by an *entire renewal* of the pavements, except in such places as shall appear, upon a fair and impartial survey, to stand in need only of *repair*. Though the doing this will create an inconsiderable expence to *some*; to *others* it will be burthensome in a greater or less degree. Where houses are very small, bad, and of low

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rents, even in capital streets, and the inhabitants in very mean circumstances, regard must be had to them. How can this be, except by a *fund*, to be brought *in aid* of such persons, at the discretion of the commissioners?

But what deserves, yet more *serious* attention, is the inability of those, who are seldom masters of so many shillings, as it will require pounds to renew their pavements, and make it *perfect* and *compleat*. You say, “ * As no *rate* is to be made for “ paving, no persons can complain of a “ grievance or injury, when he is compell- “ able to repair no more, than concerns “ himself, nor more than at present by law “ he is obliged.” Now, if I apprehend the matter right, it is the *tenant* who is to pave before his own door. Had you made the *landlord* subject to the performance, in default of the *tenants* ability, it is much to be doubted, whether there are not many places, frequently passed over by the greatest personages in the kingdom, where even *landlords* are in circumstances too abject, to perform the duty in question.

Nor

* *Proposal, note, page 3.*

Nor is it only the expence, of the renewal of the pavements in the first instance, but also the constant support of it: hence it seems to follow, that *there must be a fund*, appropriated to this use. You have provided for the lighting, and cleansing, by a *rate or assessment*, by which those in affluent circumstances will pay what the poor are deficient. But I see not how that deficiency is to be supplyed in the matter of paving.

As to the difficulty which thus occurs to me, I think it may be easily removed. Those who do not plead poverty, or do not give sufficient proof of it, though the paving, in the first instance, should be a little burthensome to them, there seems to be a necessity, arising from the nature of the thing, and indeed from the nature of the law as it has long stood; for them to submit as good subjects ought, in a case of such general utility, though many a worthy tradesman should have neither *equipage*, nor *cart*, of his own, to drive over his pavement when he has made it.

But the nobleman and commoner who ride in their *equipages*, and those who are

posessed of *carts* and teams, as well as every other kind of carriage which pass over the streets, have a *double interest* in this affair. To these, I presume, the state may with the utmost propriety refer itself; that *luxury*, and *wealth*, and the convenience of individuals, who get comfortable bread by horses and carriages, may by their *contribution*, answer the ends of the legislature, and relieve the indigent. And since every man, in the way I am now amusing myself, may make what proposal he pleases; with a view to render yours the more compleat, mine is as follows.

That every coach, chariot, post-chaise, machine, open chaise, or carriage of what denomination soever of four wheels, not let out upon hire, belonging to any persons whatsoever, within the bills of mortality, shall pay a sum not under fifty shillings, for every such carriage.

That Chaises, chairs, and every kind of carriage with two wheels, within the said limit, not let out upon hire, shall pay a sum not under twenty shillings.

That all stage-coaches which come to, and put up in London, its suburbs, in Westminster,

Westminster, its liberties, and the parishes in Middlesex; with all other carriages of what denomination soever having four wheels, (which already pay upon the wheel-act) within the said bills of mortality, shall pay a sum not under thirty shillings each.

That all chaises, chairs, post-chaises, and other two wheel carriages (which now pay on the wheel-act) within the said bills of mortality, and are let out on hire, shall pay each a sum not under sixteen shillings.

That all carts * belonging to persons living within the said bills of mortality, if the wheels thereof are bound with iron, shall pay a sum, not under twenty-five shillings; and those whose wheels are not, bound with iron, shall pay only fifteen shillings.

That all houses in London, its suburbs, Westminster, its Liberties, and parishes in Middlesex, which are generally understood to be included

* I have omitted to remark, if carts are to be drawn with nine inch wheels in the streets; if the bodies of such carts must not be made, after a proper time, about six inches narrower; and so made out in length; otherwise we shall find great inconvenience, in narrow, or much frequented places.

included in the two cities, whose rents are not under fifteen pounds a year, in all such streets, courts, lanes, and allies, where horses have no thorough-fare, and which require very little, or no present expence in paving, shall be assessed, under the name and denomination of the *pavement assessment*, to be levied in six payments, at the distance of three months each, such a sum as shall bear a proportion of two third parts, of the expence of *new paving*, in the first instance, of the *high-way streets* made by those *tenants*, who not only make good, but also support their pavements, for the general use.

This *temporary tax*, or *expedient*, for effectually paving the streets, I apprehend, would raise a sum sufficient to answer all the purposes intended ; not only with regard to the immediate paving of those streets, whose inhabitants are unable to do it themselves ; but also that the *overplus being employed in the national funds*, would produce annually, sufficient to make good all such pavements as relate to this proposition.

I am very sensible that a people, too apt to complain, may receive some alarms, lest this *tax*, should be continued ; and that the sum which

which is thus raised, might be diverted to other purposes than was originally intended. Many *general* taxes have, no doubt, met this fate: but this, which is particular, limited to place and person, and most interesting to the law-givers themselves; surely the act may be so worded; the execution of it so performed; and the trust of money so lodged with such *indubitable security*, as must obviate *every* objection of this kind, with almost *every* man, who does not mean to conjure up difficulties, to the obstruction of the general interest of the community.

As my *scheme*, is become more enlarged, and the difficulties in the execution of it almost *subdued*, at least in my own mind, I must acknowledge to you, that it is not Westminster, and the Parishes in Middlesex only, which I have in my thoughts: I mean to include *London* also. The same legislative power that directs in *one* case, can give laws to *both*. The interest of *both*, in this respect, seems to be common, and indeed, inseparably connected. A law which may be extended to both, will hurt neither, with respect to the divisions and subdivisions of districts, and parishes, which regard their civil oeconomy.

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The citizens of *London* acknowledge, that their want of paving and cleansing is become very great; and no ways inferior to that of *Westminster*. If they are sufficiently *lighted*, so as to have no occasion to ask for any thing in that respect, *one* part of their business is *done*; but it does not follow that the other *two* parts should be left *undone*. Nor does it seem just or reasonable, that the *citizen* should ride at his ease, after passing *Temple-bar*, when he comes to court, to the house of commons, to the courts of judicature; or, to amuse himself at the playhouse; if the *courtier*, when he goes to a city feast, to the bank, or to address an heiress, is subject to all the dangers and inconveniences of filth and a bad pavement.

Perhaps I should have confined myself to the compass of your *proposal*, if the difficulty had not occurred to me concerning the pavements being made good by *tenants*, when I am sure some of these are utterly incapable of doing it. My scheme then must stand enlarged as it is: let those, to whom it belongs, judge and determine what they please.—The only point which remains with me, in which I am a little perplexed, is, concerning the di-

division of the sum raised, *on my plan*, by the tax on carriages within the bills of mortality, as already mentioned, and the assessment of houses in lanes, squares, courts and allies, which are never passed by horses. To form an adequate idea, in what manner this ought to be done; I think as just an estimate, as possible, ought to be procured, of the state and condition of every parish, with respect to the number of square feet of pavement, to be renewed, by tenants occupying such pavement, who are most apparently incapable to renew them, or at most can only contribute a small share towards it. And here it may be proper to remember, that *London* and *Westminster* should be distinguished; because in the former there is a civil magistracy, which, I apprehend, can soon arrive at a competent knowledge of their case. One may also suppose, that the vigilance and application of the commissioners, to be appointed on your plan, operating with the parish officers, will arrive at such a knowledge of their circumstances, with respect to the poor tenants in *Westminster*, its liberties, and the parishes in Middlesex, as will be sufficient to answer the purpose. Thus a means might be found to regulate the true proportions of

the sum raised, to be allotted to each parish.

I am aware, that this proposition will be considered of too complex a nature, and too much depending on the integrity and unanimity of the respective parishes, even supposing the *wheel-collection* will be made at a very small expence. — Let us suppose then, that we can bring almost the *same thing* into a narrower compass ; and form it in the most plain and simple manner. If in London, Westminster, and their appendages, without taking in the bills of mortality ; or if you please, in Westminster, its liberties, and the parishes in Middlesex only, the commissioners where entrusted, with the *wheel-collection*, as well as the *pavement-af fection*, then they might regard the concerns of their own parish only ; and be accountable for their particular receipts and disbursements. But this should not hinder a *rich parish*, whose collection is large, and more than sufficient, to assist a *poor one*, in a manner which should be truely equitable, and agreeable to the design of the legislature, in granting such fund in aid of the poor.

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As to the *pavement-*assess*ment*, that, seems to be striking and very equitable. I suppose, that the indulgence of *two third parts only* (many of the inhabitants, in courts, &c. using the streets more than those who will pay the *whole* of their pavement) will obviate all ground for clamor, especially as a year and a half is given for the payment. The manner of estimating this *assess*ment, upon the strictest principles of equity, should, I apprehend, be thus: Take twelve, or any given number of houses, from sixty-five to seventy pounds rent each, situated in streets of different breadths, and which will consequently create a different expence in paving. By seeing the total amount of *twelve* of such pavements, calculate what *one* comes to, upon an avarage: then say, if a house of seventy pounds cost so much in paving, what is to be allowed by a house of *such a rent*; and two thirds of such sum, is the amount to be paid in the six payments.

In the mean while, this need be no obstruction to the *grand design*. If any sum is to be thus brought *in aid of the poor tenant*, it should in all reason *animate* the undertaking, not *dishearten* you. As this business is, in

in most respects, practicable without such aid, it surely will be more so *with* it.

If by means of my friends, I can communicate your design to the most considerable persons in the city, perhaps the knowledge that such a thing is going forward, at this end of the town, will induce them to do something either upon their *old*, or some *new* principle; and leave you to propose what you think proper. Or, which is much better, *they* also will make application to parliament, and in some measure, act in consort with *Westminster*. Ere the proper time arrives, for introducing your *proposal*, it is probable I shall be able to inform you further. You may depend, 'till I see the issue, I shall not cease to *plead* in so *beneficial a Cause*.

I have yet further to remark on your *proposal*, pages 8, 9, and 10, that I think the *commissioners themselves*, with the attendance of the *surveyors*, should make the contracts with the lamp-lighters and scavengers; and, if it should be necessary for any particular place, with the paviors also; that they may *see* and *know* the persons the contracts are made with, and also the *conditions* of such contracts; and from thence be the more enabled to keep the contractors *strictly* to their duty, which is one of the most material parts of the business.

Dec. 23. 1754.

